

THE BERIA PURGE AND SUBSEQUENT
SOVIET POLICY

1. Timing of Beria's arrest in relation to Soviet Policies.

a. Timing of Beria's fall from power.

1. Earliest indication Beria's influence dropping is

postponement Georgia Party Congress called for

25 May.

2. Beria's absence from opera 27 June plus presence tanks
same day vicinity his house lead Western observers to
place his actual arrest that date.

3. Berlin riots may have provided opportunity and pretext
to do away with him.

4. However, some evidence his fall occurred prior to
riots:

(a) 15-16 June company grade MVD officers in occupied
Europe express extreme concern over unidentified
incident on which they anxiously await further news.

(b) Evidence during whole month June of strange
disruption in administration some Soviet foreign
intelligence nets.

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B. Relation to Soviet Policies.

1. Must consider that Beria's policy position prior to his fall may have little relation to subsequent course Soviet policy.
2. Most important factor Beria purge appears as internal power struggle. Borne out by accusations he using police for personal ends.
3. More likely Beria was antagonist than proponent of soft tactics.
4. "Internal liberalization" program composed three parts:
 - (a) New emphasis on increasing consumer goods. Indications this policy continues - (1) increased better imports from Dutch, (2) frozen beef, mutton, pork orders to Australia, (3) Soviet plan for first half 1953 increases emphasis on consumer goods.
 - (b) De-emphasis government dependence on repressive system forced labor (amnesty decree) plus promise rewrite criminal code in favor of civil rights. Unlikely

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Beria as police chief favored governmental reorganization or acts limiting his ministry's functions or removing his trained personnel.

(c) Anti-Bassification propaganda campaign emphasizing equality of minorities with Great Russians. This apparently reversed. Probably connected with Beria since he apparently touched off campaign by his April reorganization of the Georgian party and government.

5. Propaganda re Beria emphasized his connection with West and echoes vigilance campaign. However, in past few days anti-Beria propaganda strangely deemphasized. Too early to determine significance.

6. Quiet removal two most recent purges possibly connected. Beria suggests there may not be large show trials. Purges may be gradual and limited to few high officials.

7. Increase in anti-US propaganda re Korea, East German riots, and implication with Beria as Westers agent tailored

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to specific situations for which Kremlin needed external scapegoat. Do not appear to affect over-all conciliatory policy.

3. Moderate diplomatic moves continue.

(a) Conciliatory tactics continue with bordering countries - resumption diplomatic relations Israel (20 July) and restoration normal diplomatic relations toward Greece - pending - settlement financial claims and border problems with Iran - formation satellite-Yugoslav joint border commissions during June-July

4. Continuing interest in expanding foreign contacts and increasing foreign goodwill.

- (a) \$1,000,000 to UN technical Assistance program.
- (b) Similar Polish offer of \$75,000.
- (c) Exit visas given two more Russian wives American citizens.
- (d) \$10,000 gift to Japanese flood relief.
- (e) Agreement with Austria turning over Ybbs-Persenbergs dam.

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10. Increase in foreign trade continues.

- (a) Agreement tripling trade France to \$34 million annually each way.
- (b) Doubling of trade with Denmark to \$40 million annual total.
- (c) Expanding trade with Greece to \$10 million annually each way.
- (d) Large agreement pending with Argentina with whom no trade since 1947. (Total trade one year period \$180 million)

11. Additional signs conciliatory policy in satellites.

- (a) Romania and Hungary cancel agricultural debts.
- (b) Hungarian government reduces cooperative delivery quotas 10%.
- (c) Hungarian Premier Nagy announces decrees to be promulgated on amnesty and abolition labor camps.
- (d) However, Cominform journal treatment Nagy and Rákosi speeches seem to warn that future concessions will be limited.

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12. Attempt to strengthen Soviet position in East Germany.

- (a) Economic concessions continue with increase in wages and food supply. Announced exchange \$57.5 million worth of Soviet food for manufactures.
- (b) Reported reorganization of Security Ministry -- together with indications that increased security measures and strengthening of East German regime are planned.
- (c) Announcements that improved living standard depends on increased worker productivity.
- (d) 15 July - East German call for unity talks is propaganda -- does not contain elements conducive to agreement.

C. Conclusions.

- 1. Beria purge has generally not affected policy.
- 2. Future policy will be determined by exigencies of local situation -- for example return to strict measures Germany would indicate need for discipline rather than downfall of alleged proponent of softness.

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3. Already clear new tactics not being applied across the

board -- no economic concessions Poland, Bulgaria.

4. Some apparent slackening conciliatory gestures Germany

and Hungary -- possibly due to Soviet desire to reassure

Communists there will be no change fundamental aims of

Communism.

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